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The Right Of Political Asylum

The government's dilemma over what to do about Capt. Hsuan Wei involves a clash of its own principles.

The Chinese Nationalist officer was arrested here by Naval Intelligence at the request of Chiang Kai-shek's government. He fears execution for political criticism if he is returned. He has resigned his commission and asked for asylum here.

Naval Intelligence believes it is justified in returning him promptly at the request of the Nationalist government on Formosa. Naturally, it would uphold the right of one nation's armed forces to demand and get the return of deserters. This point of view, however, ignores the political aspects of Hsuan's case.

Seldom do desertions in our armed forces or those of our chief allies have political complications. And it is expedient to have working extradition agreements with friendly nations. The question in Hsuan's case is: Does the Chiang Kai-shek government classify as a friendly nation?

Militarily, it does. Politically, there is considerable doubt that it does.

Hsuan has criticized Chiang's regime as a police state. His is not the first voice to say this. K. C. Wu, former governor of Formosa, who broke with Chiang and now lives in Evanston, has made the same charge. Wu's notification Wednesday that Chiang had refused to permit Wu's son to come to the United States is indication that political criticism of Chiang brings retaliation.

Wu, who should be in a position to know, has declared flatly that Hsuan will be killed on his return after a mock trial and a sentence to prison. That is police state tyranny.

Fortunately, the hurried deportation was halted at San Francisco. Our government has a chance to take a long look at the case. In similar previous cases the State Department has interceded to grant asylum to Spanish and Yugoslav nationals who feared persecution in their native lands. In the anti-Communist alliance, Spain and Yugoslavia are technically friendly nations. But that does not supersede the fundamental right of an individual to political safety.

Intelligence Study

Sen. McCarthy's dangerous plans to conduct one of his hoop-la investigations into the Central Intelligence Agency have been sidetracked. Instead, there will be a study of the nation's top-secret and vital agency by a task force of the able and respected Government Study Commission, headed by former President Hoover.

The task force will be headed by Gen. Mark Clark, who now is president of the Citadel, military college at Charleston, S.C. This great soldier knows well the functions and immeasurable value of the CIA, which gathers information from sources all over the world upon which life-and-death decisions of our country may be based. Gen. Clark will conduct the study with no thought of building up personal publicity for himself, as McCarthy would.

McCarthy has charged that the sensitive intelligence agency is heavily infiltrated by Communists. We assume that this charge is no more responsible and true than other reckless statements made by McCarthy. But even if it were, the proper procedure for

The classic doctrine of political asylum for the individual has traditionally been upheld by the United States. In the light of Wu's charges, we believe the government is morally obligated to grant asylum to Hsuan.

Legal experts questioned on the matter cite the technicalities of international law which seem to uphold the deportation without a hearing. The legal snarl in Hsuan's case is that technically he is a military man assigned to this country under the jurisdiction of his own government. His own government has charged him with desertion.

But what do you suppose the U.S. government would do if a Russian military attaché fled the Soviet embassy in Washington to ask asylum, and the Reds demanded his return as a deserter?

United Fruit Suit

The government has charged the United Fruit Co. with violation of the Sherman antitrust act and with monopolizing and restraining interstate and foreign trade. This action has confused the Communist phony propaganda line that the United States conspired with United Fruit to overthrow the Red regime in Guatemala. So the Daily Worker takes the line that the antitrust suit is just a cover-up.

According to the Washington Post, the time of the filing of the suit was "accidental." It has been in preparation for some time.

It might be argued that the civil suit indicates the U.S. is sympathetic with Latin American grievances against the company, which is bigger than some Central American governments.

Communist agitators paint the company as a cruel exploiter of workers and resources. Actually, in recent years, the company's policies have been on the enlightened side. High wages have been paid and social responsibilities acknowledged.

The federal suit has nothing to do with emotions about the company, pro or con. It has nothing to do with the Guatemalan situation. It is concerned only with alleged violation of U.S. law and should be judged on that basis alone.

correcting the situation would not lie in the bull-in-the-china-shop type of "investigation" McCarthy conducts. It calls for a careful and calm study concerned with facts and not headlines.

Even a supersecret agency such as CIA should be scrutinized from time to time. The secret nature of its work does not absolve it from giving an account of its stewardship.

The nation will feel easier after Gen. Clark reports and resolves the doubts raised by McCarthy, who says he has "complete confidence" in the general.

After the CIA study, perhaps Gen. Clark could look into other places, such as defense plants, McCarthy says are infiltrated with Communists. The nation would have more confidence in such a study than in one of McCarthy's circuses.

By The Way . . .

"A recent survey shows that about 90 per cent of college girls intend to remain single." Someone should warn young men that this intention is subject to change without notice.

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WHICH CAME FIRST, CIA OR CONGRESS?

Inasmuch as Sen. McCarthy had announced that the central intelligence agency deserved early attention from his subcommittee when it again was free to act, that agency must have breathed a sigh of relief when it became known that the Hoover commission intended to study its structure and function. The leader of the "task force" assigned to this mission is Gen. Mark Clark, now retired from the army.

Gen. Clark denies that he and his group are taking on the job to "beat McCarthy to the punch," and certainly it would not be possible to attribute a political motive to former President Hoover in ordering the inquiry. Nevertheless, Allen W. Dulles, the director of the CIA, promptly said that he "welcomed" the Clark study, and it is a fair inference that he would much prefer to subject his mysterious operations to the attention of anyone rather than Sen. McCarthy.

It is high time that somebody took a look at the CIA to find out what goes on. This global sleuthing outfit shuns the light of day, wants no publicity, and holds itself accountable to no one. Mr. McCarthy has suggested that some Communists may have installed themselves in the CIA, which is possible, considering the fact that the predecessor organization known as the office of strategic services had its share of them, some of whom were even charged with the political murder of an American officer who wasn't considered friendly enough to Russia.

But the main thing is to find out whether the CIA is using the large sums it receives in appropriations from Congress to good effect and whether it can justify its existence. If it won't talk, nobody ever could find out.

Allen Dulles is said to have taken the stand, with White House support, that he could not let Mr. McCarthy examine his men, while the senator contends that Congress should determine whether they should be exempt from testifying.

This issue has a direct bearing on the controversy growing out of the Stevens-McCarthy hearings whether the executive branch can take refuge in some Presidential directive declaring itself to be above any prying by Congress. It seems to us that the pertinent fact is a simple one. Aside from the legislative branch, the Constitution makes provision only for the offices of President, justices of the Supreme court, and diplomatic officials. All other departments, agencies, and posts within them owe their existence to action by Congress creating them.

How, when Congress can abolish executive and administrative agencies, redefine their duties, and enlarge or limit their powers, can these agencies argue that the children of Congress have become superior to the parent?

We think that Congress must assert that it has an absolute right to possess itself of any information that it deems necessary in order to determine whether the agencies of its creation are doing their work properly. The CIA should enjoy no more self-conferred exemption than any other agency which was created by Congress and can be abolished by Congress.

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